2014-15

Annual Report

PROVINCIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON THE STATUS OF
WOMEN
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

Provincial Advisory Council
on the Status of Women

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May 8, 2015

Honourable Susan Sullivan
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Dear Minister Sullivan:

On behalf of the members of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women, it is my pleasure to submit our 2014-2015 Annual Report in accordance with the guidelines for Annual Performance Reports for Category 2 Government Entities.

This report was prepared under my direction. My signature reflects Advisory Council members' accountability for the results contained in this report.

Sincerely,

Linda Ross

Linda Ross
President/CEO

LR

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1 Organizational Overview

The Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women (Advisory Council) was established in 1980 by the Provincial Government of the day and received legislative standing with the introduction of the *Status of Women Advisory Council Act*. It was created to advise the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on issues affecting the status of women, as well as to raise awareness of women's issues within the general public.

The eleven member Advisory Council (see Appendix A) is appointed for three year terms by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. Appointments reflect the regional representation of women with diverse backgrounds and experience. The members are eligible for re-appointment. The Advisory Council is an arms-length legislated body which reports to the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women.

The President/CEO position is salaried and filled through an open competition and subsequent appointment. Council members other than the President/CEO are selected and appointed through an open nomination process. Selection criteria include representation from diverse women's population and sectors, demonstrated leadership in working to advance the status of women and the ability to work on women's equality issues from a community, regional or provincial perspective.

The Advisory Council staff work closely with the Women's Policy Office, a branch of Executive Council. The Advisory Council also works with women, women's groups, community and other equality-seeking organizations which share an agenda to advance women's equality.

1.1 2014-15 Council Members

Position	Individual	Community Representation
President/CEO	Linda Ross	St. John's
Vice President	Carolyn Lavers	Port au Choix
Member	Mary Pia Benuen	Sheshatshiu
Member	Stephanie Flowers	Happy Valley-Goose Bay
Member	Yamuna Kutty	St. John's
Member	Michelle Murdoch	St. John's
Member	Kelly Power	Paradise
Member	Hilda Whelan	Whitbourne
Member	Cynthia Benoit	Conne River
Member	Lorraine Hearn	Grand Falls–Windsor
Member	Melita Collier	St. Alban's

1.2 Staff

The Advisory Council operates with a complement of four staff including:

- President/CEO
- Executive Administrator
- Policy and Research Analyst
- Director of Public Engagement

1.3 Mandate

The mandate of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women is derived from Section 3 of the *Status of Women Advisory Council Act*, which states that the Advisory Council shall:

- Advise the minister on those matters relating to the status of women that the minister refers to the advisory council for consideration;

- Advise the minister on those matters relating to the status of women that the advisory council feels appropriate;

- Bring before the government and the public matters of interest and concern to women; and,

- Establish the general policies that will government the organization, administration and operation of the advisory council.

1.4 Vision

The vision of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women is equality, equity and inclusion for women in Newfoundland and Labrador.

1.5 Mission Statement

By March 31, 2017, the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women will have enhanced its outreach and advisory services in priority areas related to advancing the status of women.

1.6 Physical Location

The leased, accessible office space is located at 15 Hallett Crescent, Suite 103, St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador.

1.7 Budget

In April 2014, the Advisory Council was allocated $430,100.

2 Lines of Business

Lines of business are defined as those discrete and coherent sets of services that represent what the Advisory Council provides to its external clients.

In keeping with the Advisory Council's legislated mandate, the following lines of business have been identified:

- Advising the Provincial Government on issues affecting the status of women;
- Public awareness and engagement; and,
- Administration and operation of the Advisory Council.

In achieving its legislative mandate, the Advisory Council aims to consider and incorporate the perspectives of diverse populations of women, including but not limited to, aboriginal women, women with disabilities and visible minorities.

2.1 Advising Government on Issues Affecting the Status of Women

The Advisory Council provides advice as requested by the Minister and other government departments and agencies. On an ongoing basis, the Advisory Council is asked for recommendations on changes to, or the creation of, legislation, policies and practices affecting the status of women in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Through a gender lens and feminist based analysis, the work of the Advisory Council is centered on improving the Provincial Government's policies, programs, practices, services, legislation and budget allocations as a means of advancing the equality of women in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Advisory Council also brings emerging issues and concerns to the Provincial Government. It works with individual women, women's groups, community organizations and the Women's Policy Office to identify the issues and develop an analysis of problems and solutions.

The Advisory Council provides advice to the Provincial Government and advocates for systemic changes. Advice is generally provided through position papers, briefs, written recommendations and meeting with Provincial Government officials and departmental representatives. The Advisory Council also engages in issue analysis, research and consultation. In addition, it participates in a variety of committees and working groups related to advancing the status of women.

2.2 Public Awareness and Engagement

The Advisory Council undertakes public awareness and engagement (otherwise identified as 'outreach') on issues related to women's social, economic, cultural and legal equality and inclusion. Through a variety of mediums, the Advisory Council provides public awareness and engages with government and community at large. These mediums include but are not limited to media and public presentations, face-to face discussions, print and promotional material, social media and events. When working on specific issues, the Advisory Council collaborates with and seeks information from stakeholders. It actively engages in networking and consultation with stakeholders throughout the province, as well as undertakes research on specific issues

2.3 Administration and Operation of the Advisory Council

The Advisory Council's third line of business is focused on the administration and operation of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women. This entails managing the day-to-day operations of the organization which includes administration, finance and human resources. In addition, this line of business includes the provision of ongoing support to the Advisory Council and the quarterly meetings of Council members.

3 Shared Commitments & Accomplishments

It is the mandate of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women to bring before the Provincial Government and the public, matters of interest and concern to women. This work is achieved through partnerships and collaboration with various government departments and agencies. Staff at the Advisory Council also works closely with community groups, participating in committees and on boards. Through this work, the Advisory Council gains a broader understanding of issues related to the status of women which is essential to the Advisory Council's provision of advice and/or recommendations on policy development.

During the period covered by this report, 2014-15, the Advisory Council shared information, analysis and strategies to advance a variety of women's equality issues.

The Advisory Council also established and maintained positive working relationships with the following departments and agencies, and their respective Ministers and/or senior staff:

- Advanced Education and Skills
- Child, Youth and Family Services
- Education and Early Childhood Development
- English School District
- Finance

- Health and Community Services/Regional Health Authorities
- Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development
- Justice and Public Safety
- Natural Resources
- Office of Public Engagement
- Seniors, Wellness and Social Development

The Advisory Council supported and/or worked with many feminist groups and other community organizations including:

Provincial

- Equal Voice NL Chapter
- Multicultural Women's Organization (MWONL)
- Newfoundland and Labrador Organization of Women Entrepreneurs (NLOWE)
- Newfoundland and Labrador Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre (NLSACPC)
- Office to Advance Women Apprentices (OAWA)
- Pathways Foundation
- Planned Parenthood-NL Sexual Health Centre
- Public Legal Information Association of NL (PLIAN)
- Regional Coalitions against Violence
- Status of Women Councils
- THRIVE-Community Youth Network
- YWCA St. John's

National

- Coalition of Provincial and Territorial Advisory Councils on the Status of Women

External Committees or Boards of Directors Representation

- Coalition against the Sexual Exploitation of Youth (CASEY)
- Council of Marine Professionals Association (COMPASS)
- Newfoundland and Labrador Coalition against Human Trafficking
- Women Interested in Successful Employment (WISE)
- Women in Resource Development Corporation (WRDC)

Collaborations

- Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC)
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)

These groups were important partners in the Advisory Council's work to advance the status of women deepening the Advisory Council's understanding of the myriad of issues faced by women seeking front line services of these organizations. Through partnerships with the Coalition against Violence–Avalon East, NLSACPC, Planned Parenthood–NL Sexual Health Centre, YWCA, and PLIAN, the Advisory Council has increased public awareness of violence against women through public and media

presentations, events such as roundtables, guest lectures at Memorial University, and forums and workshops. Further to this, we have collaborated on educational initiatives on healthy relationships for youth.

Work with WRDC, WISE, OAWA, NLOWE and COMPASS has centered on women's economic advancement through supports for women to enter traditionally male dominated fields, enhancing awareness of young women and girls regarding the options available to them in these areas and increasing support for women owned businesses to gain business access through supplier diversity.

The Advisory Council met with members of both the RNC and RCMP on numerous occasions during the 2014-15 period, sharing information and strategizing around issues such as domestic violence and initiatives to increase public awareness of recognizing violence and the role citizens have in ending this problem.

Over the 2014-15 period, the Advisory Council experienced several highlights and accomplishments. Significant among the highlights were the shared commitments to women's equality achieved through partnership and collaborations, increasing the public's awareness of the Advisory Council through social media and other media sources, and providing the Provincial Government with six submissions relating to women's social and economic security.

During 2014-15, the Advisory Council collaborated with the RNC, the RCMP and community organizations on issues related to women in the sex trade and human trafficking as part of the Newfoundland and Labrador Human Trafficking Coalition. This committee provides education and training on the trafficking of persons and organized a two and a half day conference on the subject. Through this partnership we also assisted the Coalition with a funding application to the Federal Government's Victims Fund to provide additional training to law enforcement and first responders.

Collaborating with and supporting the work of community organizations and the Government, the Advisory Council was able to make a significant contribution to increasing public awareness on cyber safety for girls and young women, healthy relationships and key trends in barriers for young women in the Province. Building on the successful distribution and response to the "Loves Me-Loves Me Not" bookmarks, in 2014-15 the Advisory Council partnered with community organizations on the development and launch of a "Healthy Relationship" booklet covering topics such as cyber safety, and unhealthy messages in popular music lyrics.

Significant amongst the Advisory Council accomplishments was the 2015 launch of the *Organize to Win: A Political Guidebook for Women Newfoundland and Labrador* in partnership with Equal Voice NL Chapter. Women continue to be under represented in senior leadership and decision making positions within governments and corporations, and represent the minority on agencies, boards and commissions. Although the percentage of Newfoundland and Labrador women elected to political office remains lower than their male counterparts, women are participating and achieving success in

politics. The Advisory Council wanted to provide a *Guidebook* in the hopes that it will interest more women in this Province to consider running for public office or support women interested in running a campaign.

Assisting with the two day visit of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians, the Advisory Council had the valuable opportunity to discuss issues women and girls face both on a provincial and national scale. Representatives from each province and territory, and one representative from the federal parliament, visited the province allowing the opportunity to participate in and engage in conversations regarding policies, programs and initiatives on women's social and economic security.

Public awareness of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women continues to be a vital piece to ensuring we continue to reach audiences from every part of our Province, enhancing collaboration and another way to informally network. We not only want to increase our visibility and our mandate, but we also want to engage a diversity of voices to provide timely feedback on the dissemination of information we provide. The presence of the Advisory Council on social media, particularly Twitter, is a long term commitment providing a benefit of establishing an online reputation with local audiences. The Advisory Council Twitter account was launched in June 2014 and has accounted for 700 tweets on women's social and economic security information and over has 470 followers on a local, national, and international scale. At times our audience reach has been approximately 50,800 people. As a result, over the last 12 months proactive steps have been taken to ensure policies are in place for social media use. A Twitter policy (located on our website) as well as a Communications Strategy has been developed outlining our objectives, measures, risks and mitigation when using with social media.

The Advisory Council has been very active in communicating advice and recommendations to various government departments on women's social and economic security, producing six submissions entitled: *Advancing Women in Leadership* (Board Focus), *Advancing Women's Economic Security-Women in Business in Newfoundland and Labrador*, *Advancing Women's Economic Security-Women in Leadership in Newfoundland and Labrador, Advancing Women in Male-Dominated Employment*, *Gendered Poverty Reduction Strategy*, and *Primary Health Care*.

4 Strategic Issues – Report on Performance

In consideration of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador's strategic direction, and the mandate of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women, the Advisory Council advanced strategic issues in the following area for the period April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015:

- Improved opportunities for women through the removal of systemic barriers.

The following report provides details of the Advisory Council's success in achieving its planned goals and objectives in support of the strategic direction of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

4.1 Issue 1: Economic Security

Economic security means the ability to meet current basic needs such as food, clothing shelter, and the ability to cover any unexpected costs. To address economic security for women in the Province, the Advisory Council has identified economic security as a strategic issue that it will work on over the next two years as identified in the 2014-2017 Business Plan. Economic instability is a systemic barrier for many women throughout our Province and efforts to address these issues are key components in advancing the status of women.

Goal 1: **By March 31, 2017, the Advisory Council will have publicly highlighted issues related to the economic security of women and provided advice to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on advancing the economic security of women.**

Measure: Publicly highlighted issues related to the economic security of women and provided advice to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on advancing the economic security of women.

Indicators:

- Provided advice to the Provincial Government regarding impacts on women;
- Participated in and engaged with organizations regarding policies, programs and initiatives on issues impacting the economic security of women;
- Developed and delivered public awareness initiatives on issues impacting the economic security of women.

Objective 1:	By March 31, 2015, the Advisory Council will have engaged with individuals and organizations on advancing the economic security of women.
Measure:	Engaged with individuals and organizations on advancing the economic security of women.
Indicator:	Progress and Accomplishments
• Discussed with individuals and organizations issues impacting women's participation and employment in the emerging resource sector.	The Advisory Council reviewed the White Rose Extension Project (WREP) Diversity Plan to ensure that women of this Province have the opportunity for meaningful participation in all aspects of the project. A written submission by the Advisory Council to the Public Review of the White Rose Extension Project (WREP) Diversity Plan included recommendations related to childcare, business access and employment targets for women. The Advisory Council also attended the White Rose Project 2014 Diversity Forum to learn more about Husky's White Rose Extension Project and the implementation of Husky's commitments related to diversity for the Project. The Advisory Council attended a meeting hosted by WRDC and the OAWA to discuss and learn about the barriers and challenges that women are facing in traditionally male-dominated occupations. In follow-up to that meeting the Advisory Council consulted with WRDC and OAWA in the development of the brief *Advancing Women in Male-dominated Employment* which was submitted to the Department of Natural Resources.
• Developed and delivered public awareness initiatives related to issues impacting the economic security of women.	Increasing women's participation in leadership roles is critical to enhancing the social and economic status of women. A woman's income increases with her seniority and attainment of leadership roles, on boards, in elected office and employment. Increasing the participation of women in leadership roles and elected office in turn contributes to program and policy change that further the economic security of women more broadly as gender considerations are brought to the table. Endeavouring to increase the number of women in elected office, the Advisory Council, in partnership with Equal Voice NL Chapter, launched the *Organize to Win: A Political Guidebook for Women Newfoundland and Labrador* at the Fluvarium in March 2015 to coincide with the 90th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage Movement in Newfoundland and Labrador. The

	Advisory Council sought permission to modify the political guidebook *Votes for Women Fourth Edition* produced by the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women. The Guidebook is a tool for women who are interested in running in an election or interested in helping a woman run in an election. Further to the commemoration of the 90th Anniversary of women gaining the right to vote and run for public office the Advisory Council, along with author Trudy-Morgan Cole, worked with Government House and Lieutenant Governor Frank and Patricia Fagan to host a reception honouring the history of women's suffrage and the importance of getting more women to run for elected office. A diverse audience of approximately 60 guests were in attendance to help celebrate and acknowledge this event. Another initiative to raise public awareness of women's economic security involved a partnership with the Department of Education. Through this collaboration, the Advisory Council created and co-designed a 90th Anniversary Women's Suffrage bookmark aimed at junior and high school students across the province. The bookmark will help raise youth's awareness of the historical Newfoundland Suffrage movement by providing a timeline of educational facts on women in elected office. During the 2014-2015 reporting period the Advisory Council used Twitter, as a complementary medium of communication, sending out 250 tweets on poverty and economic instability that impact women. This avenue was utilized to increase public awareness regarding women's economic security and provide other informal ways for citizens to engage with the Advisory Council. During 2014 the Advisory Council continued as a member of the Ovations committee overseeing the *Ovations Program.* The committee held two regional Lunch & Learns featuring female community and business leaders as keynote speakers. There was a Lunch and Learn in Corner Brook in April and one in Labrador in May. The committee sponsored the Super Women event at Memorial University which involved women leaders speaking with female students on the

	importance of mentorship in supporting the achievement of women. Ovations also sponsored an award for the YWCA Women of Distinction Awards and offered a bursary for The Extraordinary Women's Leadership program.
• Shared information and research with respect to supports and barriers to women's economic advancement within the skilled trades, business and leadership.	In the last year the Advisory Council was involved with various committees to continue the discussions around women's participation in male-dominated industries. As an executive member of the Board of WRDC and COMPASS, the Advisory Council provided insight and shared information regarding organizational strategic plans and policy development. Additionally, PACSW used a gender based analysis when reviewing and providing feedback on created marketing material regarding enhanced supports for women entering in trades and technology, as well as the marine transportation sector. The Advisory Council continued the established relationship with NLOWE, sharing information with respect to initiatives and consulting with them on furthering business access strategies for women. The Advisory Council also submitted *Advancing Women in Business in Newfoundland and Labrador* as part of our mandate to provide advice and recommendations to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on advancing the economic security of women. Throughout the year the Advisory Council participated in a number of events to share information, research women's economic advancement and continue the establishment of collaborative relationships. Events included: Attending the national COMPASS conference and Company of Master Mariners; participation in NLOWE conference on advancing women in business; and attended the Canadian Coalition of Women in Engineering, Science, and Trades, and Technology Conference in Regina, Saskatchewan.

4.2 Issue 2: Social Security

Social security is the cornerstone to living in positive and safe communities. The Advisory Council works with a host of community groups and government departments to bring forward social issues that affect women and girls in the province. The key social security elements that the Advisory Council feel are important to focus on are: justice services; housing; safety; family; healthy relationships, youth development; social media; healthcare; child care; and, cultural and environmental sustainability.

Goal 1: **By March 31, 2017, the Advisory Council will have publicly highlighted issues related to the social security of women and provided advice to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on advancing the social security of women.**

Measure: Publicly highlighted issues related to the social security of women and provided advice to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on advancing the social security of women.

Indicators:

- Provided advice to the Provincial Government regarding impacts on women;
- Participated in and engaged with organizations regarding policies, programs and initiatives on issues impacting the social security of women;
- Developed and delivered public awareness initiatives on issues impacting the social security of women.

Objective 1:	By March 31, 2015, the Advisory Council will have engaged with individuals and organizations on advancing the social well-being of women and girls.
Measure:	Engaged with individuals and organizations on advancing the social well-being of women and girls.
Indicator:	Progress and Accomplishments
• Discussed with individuals and organizations issues impacting the social well-being of women and girls.	The Advisory Council has been working closely with the Newfoundland and Labrador Coalition Against Human Trafficking and has discussed strategies to raise awareness and training initiatives on the issue of human trafficking in the Province. The Advisory Council has supported the Coalition in their effort in applying for funding to the federal Victim's Fund that will enable them to provide training to law enforcement and first responders. Participation in the stakeholder conference held by Access to Justice with Justice Thomas Cromwell was another opportunity to discuss social security issues, such as

	enhancing justice and access to family and civil law. Following participation in this conference, the Advisory Council President was asked to be a member of the Newfoundland and Labrador Access to Justice Steering Committee which gives the Advisory Council an opportunity to provide input on family and civil justice issues through a gendered lens and how best to make these areas more accessible to the general public. Convened by Dr. Dorothy Vaandering with the Faculty of Education at Memorial University, the Advisory Council is involved with the Relationships First-Restorative Justice in Education Committee. This roundtable discusses actionable restorative approaches to changing relational dynamics among youth and adults. In conjunction with this collaboration, the Advisory Council also participates in the Violence Reduction Committee with the Harris Centre at Memorial University which strives to end societal acceptance of behavior that can contribute to violence. Discussions with Government on the safety and well-being of women and girls resulted in recommendations to legislation to permit access to information in missing person's cases.
• Developed and delivered awareness initiatives related to issues impacting the social well-being of women and girls.	The Advisory Council, working with the Newfoundland and Labrador Human Trafficking Coalition, developed a two and half day workshop which provided education and resources to the front line service providers and the public. It was held in St. John's, April 7 through April 9, 2014 and was attended by 91 people. Working in partnership with YWCA, PLIAN, NLSACPC, CAVAE, and the Office of Public Engagement, the Advisory Council developed a half day workshop for junior high school students titled "Digital Citizenship". This workshop was held on October 18th, at Holy Cross Junior High from 2:00-3:30 pm. The design of this session was to seek input from youth regarding the impact technology and social media has on their lives, particularly as it relates to cyber violence and what activities they engage in online. The session included electronic polling as a tool to communicate the session's results immediately allowing for a deeper involved, more in-depth discussion. Consistent with previous years, the Advisory Council was a

	committee member, led by NLSACPC, which planned the execution of events during Sexual Violence Awareness Week (SVA Week). We also hosted the International Women's Day 2015 proclamation signing at our office, with approximately 20 community partners in attendance, including Minister Judy Manning. The Advisory Council hosted a funding announcement on behalf of NLSACPC with Federal Minister Kellie Leitch. Events we participated in included: In Her Name Vigil for missing and murdered women and girls of Newfoundland and Labrador organized by the St. John's Status of Women Council (SJSOWC), Take Back the Night March with NLSACPC, hosted monthly meetings as committee member of the CARE Project lead by NLSACPC, and attended the Annual General Meeting of Women's Centres as well as MCWONL. During the 2014-2015 reporting period, the Advisory Council has used Twitter, as a complementary medium of communication, sending out 292 tweets on social security elements that affect women in this Province. This avenue provided timely dissemination of articles, events, workshops and conferences relating to housing, safety, family, healthy relationships, healthcare, child care, social media, and cultural and environmental sustainability. Expanding our audience reach using social media provides high rate of valuable return for both the Advisory Council and its relationships with community agencies, governments, and NGO organizations. Through successful collaboration with community partners and the English School district, the Advisory Council developed and launched "A Guide for Youth about Healthy Relationships" for students. This educational resource is aimed at helping young adults establish positive relationships which are paramount to their social well-being.
• Shared information and research on issues impacting the social well-being of women and girls.	The Advisory Council reviewed recent research and statistics regarding poverty and, more specifically, women in poverty. The Advisory Council developed a submission to the Department of Seniors, Wellness and Social Development regarding the Poverty Reduction Strategy titled *Gendered Poverty Reduction Strategy in Newfoundland and Labrador*

	The Advisory Council also provided information, research, statistics, and recommendations to the Department of Health and Community Services in response to the Premier's Summit on Health Care consultation. Through research, as well as from women's lived experiences, the Advisory Council gathered research on primary factors within the social determinants of health that shape women's health. These include income, employment, education, food and housing and were examined through a gendered lens with our submission titled *Primary Health Care in Newfoundland and Labrador.* Welcomed by Memorial University Faculty of Medicine, the President of the Advisory Council taught a class to the Master of Public Health students on health and human rights, a pertinent issue with women's social security. This increased the profile of Advisory Council's work with a broader diverse constituency.

5 Achieving Objectives for 2015-16

Goal 1:	**By March 31, 2017, the Advisory Council will have publicly highlighted issues related to the economic security of women and provided advice to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on advancing the economic security of women.**
Objective 1:	By March 31, 2016, the Advisory Council will have supported the advancement of the economic security of women.
Measure:	Supported the advancement of the economic security of women.
Indicators:	• Shared information and research with respect to economic security through Twitter, website and media. • Discussed with stakeholders and partners issues impacting women's economic security and possible solutions. • Provided briefings to various government departments on a variety of aspects of economic security for women of the province.

Goal 2:	**By March 31, 2017, the Advisory Council will have publicly highlighted issues related to the social security of women and provided advice to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on advancing the social security of women.**
Objective 1:	By March 31, 2016, the Advisory Council will have supported the advancement of the social well-being of women and girls.

Measure:	Supported the advancement of the social well-being of women and girls.
Indicators:	• Shared information and research with respect to social security of women through Twitter, website and media. • Discussed with stakeholders and partners issues impacting women's social security and possible solutions. • Provided briefings to various government departments on a variety of aspects of social security of women of the province.

6 Audited Financial Statements

AUDITOR
GENERAL
of Newfoundland and Labrador

June 24, 2015

Ref: DP03-F0915

Ms. Linda Ross
President/CEO
Provincial Advisory Council on the Status
of Women - Newfoundland and Labrador
Suite 103, 15 Hallett Crescent
St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador
A1B 3X2

Dear Ms. Ross:

I enclose six copies of the audited financial statements of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women - Newfoundland and Labrador for the year ended March 31, 2015. After signing, please return the unbound copy to me.

The Comptroller General, Department of Finance, has indicated that a signed copy of the audited financial statements should also be forwarded to that Office.

Yours truly,

TERRY PADDON, CPA, CA
Auditor General

Enclosure

c.c. Honourable Paul Davis
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Ms. Ann Marie Miller, CPA, CMA
Comptroller General

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PROVINCIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN - NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

MARCH 31, 2015

Office of the Auditor General

Management's Report

Management's Responsibility for the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women – Newfoundland and Labrador Financial Statements

The financial statements have been prepared by management in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards and the integrity and objectivity of these statements are management's responsibility. Management is also responsible for all of the notes to the financial statements, and for ensuring that this information is consistent, where appropriate, with the information contained in the financial statements.

Management is also responsible for implementing and maintaining a system of internal controls to provide reasonable assurance that transactions are properly authorized, assets are safeguarded and liabilities are recognized.

Management is also responsible for ensuring that transactions comply with relevant policies and authorities and are properly recorded to produce timely and reliable financial information.

The Council members are responsible for ensuring that management fulfills its responsibilities for financial reporting and internal control and exercises these responsibilities through participation in Council meetings. The Council members review internal financial information on a quarterly basis and external audited financial statements yearly.

The Auditor General conducts an independent audit of the annual financial statements of the Council, in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, in order to express an opinion thereon. The Auditor General has full and free access to financial management of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women - Newfoundland and Labrador.

On behalf of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women - Newfoundland and Labrador.

Linda Ross
President/CEO

AUDITOR
GENERAL
of Newfoundland and Labrador

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Council members
Provincial Advisory Council on the Status
of Women - Newfoundland and Labrador
St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

Report on the Financial Statements

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women - Newfoundland and Labrador which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2015, the statements of operations, change in net financial assets, and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit. I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

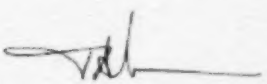
An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

Independent Auditor's Report (cont.)

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women - Newfoundland and Labrador as at March 31, 2015, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.



TERRY PADDON, CPA, CA
Auditor General

June 24, 2015
St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador

PROVINCIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN - NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

For the Year Ended March 31

	2015	2014
FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Cash (Note 3)	$ 168,226	$ 167,370
Accounts receivable (Note 4)	5,477	17,866
	173,703	185,236
LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities (Note 5)	25,534	35,198
	25,534	35,198
Net financial assets	148,169	150,038
NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS		
Tangible capital assets, net (Note 6)	2,765	4,682
Prepaid expenses (Note 7)	7,609	11,687
	10,374	16,369
Accumulated surplus	$ 158,543	$ 166,407

Contractual obligations (Note 8)

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

Signed on behalf of the Council: Linda Ross — **President/CEO**; Kelly Buss — **Member**

PROVINCIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN - NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

For the Year Ended March 31

	2015 Budget	2015 Actual	2014 Actual
	(Note 12)		
REVENUES			
Province of Newfoundland and Labrador operating grant	$ 430,100	$ 430,100	$ 424,100
Interest	-	3,273	3,083
Ovations – ticket revenues (Note 10)	-	615	792
	430,100	433,988	427,975
EXPENSES (Note 11)			
Administration	394,950	389,272	388,833
Advisement of Government	25,500	27,648	23,526
Ovations (Note 10)	-	16,597	5,059
Public Awareness and Engagement	9,150	8,335	16,054
	429,600	441,852	433,472
Annual (deficit) surplus	500	(7,864)	(5,497)
Accumulated surplus, beginning of year	166,407	166,407	171,904
Accumulated surplus, end of year	$ 166,907	$ 158,543	$ 166,407

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

PROVINCIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN - NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

STATEMENT OF CHANGE IN NET FINANCIAL ASSETS

For the Year Ended March 31

	2015 Budget	2015 Actual	2014 Actual
	(Note 12)		
Annual (deficit) surplus	$ 500	$ (7,864)	$ (5,497)
Tangible capital assets			
Acquisition of tangible capital assets	(500)	(3,133)	(1,465)
Amortization of tangible capital assets	2,000	5,050	4,174
	1,500	1,917	2,709
Prepaid expenses			
Acquisition of prepaid expense	-	(7,609)	(11,687)
Use of prepaid expense	-	11,687	10,829
	-	4,078	(858)
(Decrease) increase in net financial assets	2,000	(1,869)	(3,646)
Net financial assets, beginning of year	150,038	150,038	153,684
Net financial assets, end of year	$ 152,038	$ 148,169	$ 150,038

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

PROVINCIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN - NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the Year Ended March 31

	2015	2014
Operating transactions		
Annual deficit	$ (7,864)	$ (5,497)
Adjustment for non-cash items		
Amortization of tangible capital assets	5,050	4,174
	(2,814)	(1,323)
Change in non-cash working capital		
Accounts receivable	12,389	43,898
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(9,664)	(64,844)
Prepaid expenses	4,078	(858)
Cash (applied to) provided from operating transactions	3,989	(23,127)
Capital transactions		
Cash used to acquire tangible capital assets	(3,133)	(1,465)
Cash applied to capital transactions	(3,133)	(1,465)
(Decrease) increase in cash	856	(24,592)
Cash, beginning of year	167,370	191,962
Cash, end of year	$ 168,226	$ 167,370

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

1. Nature of operations

The Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women - Newfoundland and Labrador (the Council) is a Crown corporation of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, established under the *Status of Women Advisory Council Act*. The purpose of the Council is to advise the Minister responsible for the Status of Women, the Government and the public on matters of interest and concern to women. Its affairs are managed by Council members appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

The Council is a Crown entity of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and as such is not subject to Provincial or Federal income taxes.

2. Summary of significant accounting policies

(a) Basis of accounting

The Council is classified as an Other Government Organization as defined by Canadian Public Sector Accounting Standards (CPSAS). These financial statements are prepared by management in accordance with CPSAS for provincial reporting entities established by the Canadian Public Sector Accounting Board. The Council does not prepare a statement of remeasurement gains and losses as the Council does not enter into relevant transactions or circumstances that are being addressed by the statement.

(b) Financial instruments

The Council's financial instruments recognized in the statement of financial position consist of cash, accounts receivable and accounts payable and accrued liabilities. The Council generally recognizes a financial instrument when it enters into a contract which creates a financial asset or financial liability. Financial assets and financial liabilities are initially measured at cost, which is the fair value at the time of acquisition.

The Council subsequently measures all of its financial assets and financial liabilities at cost. Financial assets measured at cost include cash and accounts receivable. Financial liabilities measured at cost include accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

(c) Cash

Cash includes cash in the bank.

2. Summary of significant accounting policies (cont.)

(d) Tangible capital assets

Tangible capital assets are recorded at cost, including amounts that are directly related to the acquisition of the assets.

The cost, less residual value, of the tangible capital assets is amortized on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives as follows:

Furniture and equipment	5 years
Computer hardware and software	3 years
Leasehold improvements	5 years

Tangible capital assets are written down when conditions indicate that they no longer contribute to the Council's ability to provide services, or when the value of future economic benefits associated with the tangible capital assets are less than their net book value. The net write-downs are accounted for as expenses in the statement of operations.

(e) Prepaid expenses

Prepaid expenses are charged to the expense over the periods expected to benefit from it.

(f) Employee future benefits

The employees of the Council are subject to the *Public Services Pensions Act, 1991*. Employee contributions are matched by the Council and remitted to the Public Service Pension Plan Corporation from which pensions will be paid to employees when they retire. This plan is a defined benefit plan, providing a pension on retirement based on the member's age at retirement, length of service and the average of their best six years of earnings for service on or after January 1, 2015, and, for service before January 1, 2015, the higher of the average of the frozen best 5 years of earnings up to January 1, 2015, or the average of the best 6 years of earnings for all service.

During the year, there were significant changes made to the Public Service Pension Plan. The changes include: increases in contribution rates of between 2.15% and 3.25% of pensionable earnings; calculation of pension benefits, for service on or after January 1, 2015, using the average of the best six years of earnings rather than the average of the best five years of earnings; calculation of pension benefits, for service before January 1, 2015, using the higher of the average of the frozen best 5 years of earnings up to January 1, 2015, or the average of the best 6 years of earnings for all service rather than the average of the best five years of earnings; and increases in the minimum age and/or service requirements for early retirement with an unreduced pension benefit. Employees who are eligible, or become eligible, to retire on or before January 1, 2020, are exempt from increases in the minimum age and/or service requirements for early retirement with an unreduced pension benefit.

2. Summary of significant accounting policies (cont.)

(f) Employee future benefits (cont.)

The contribution of the Council to the plan is recorded as an expense for the year.

(g) Revenues

Revenues are recognized in the period in which the transactions or events occurred that gave rise to the revenues. All revenues are recorded on an accrual basis, except when the accruals cannot be determined with a reasonable degree of certainty or when their estimation is impracticable.

The Council recognizes the receipt of government transfers as revenue in the period the transfer is authorized and all eligibility criteria have been met, except when and to the extent that the transfer gives rise to an obligation that meets the definition of a liability for the Council. Government transfers consist of funding from the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Income attributable to financial instruments is reported in the statement of operations.

(h) Expenses

Expenses are reported on an accrual basis. The cost of all goods consumed and services received during the year is expensed.

Transfers, which include grants and subsidies, are recorded as expenses when the grant is authorized, eligibility criteria have been met by the recipient and a reasonable estimate of the amount can be made.

(i) Measurement uncertainty

The preparation of financial statements, in conformity with CPSAS, requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reporting amounts of assets and liabilities, and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities, at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of the revenues and expenses during the period. Items requiring the use of significant estimates include the useful life of capital assets.

Estimates are based on the best information available at the time of preparation of the financial statements and are reviewed annually to reflect new information as it becomes available. Measurement uncertainty exists in these financial statements. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

3. Cash

	2015	2014
Cash	**$ 141,490**	$ 138,100
Designated cash - *Ovations* (Note 10)	**26,736**	29,270
	$ 168,226	$ 167,370

4. Accounts receivable

	2015	2014
Harmonized sales tax receivable - *Ovations* (Note 10)	$ -	$ 10,941
Harmonized sales tax receivable	5,477	6,085
Receivables - *Ovations* (Note 10)	-	840
	$ 5,477	$ 17,866

There is no allowance for doubtful accounts since all amounts are considered collectible.

5. Accounts payable and accrued liabilities

	2015	2014
Trade accounts payables and accruals	$ 14,808	$ 24,031
Accrued leave	8,931	11,167
Payables - *Ovations* (Note 10)	1,795	-
	$ 25,534	$ 35,198

6. Tangible capital assets

	Furniture and equipment	Computer equipment and software	Leasehold improvements	Total
Cost				
Balance, March 31, 2014	$ 35,262	$ 31,624	$ 3,272	$ 70,158
Additions	-	3,133	-	3,133
Disposals	-	-	-	-
Balance, March 31, 2015	35,262	34,757	3,272	73,291
Accumulated amortization				
Balance, March 31, 2014	33,959	28,805	2,712	65,476
Amortization expense	1,303	3,607	140	5,050
Disposals	-	-	-	-
Balance, March 31, 2015	35,262	32,412	2,852	70,526
Net book value, March 31, 2015	**$ -**	**$ 2,345**	**$ 420**	**$ 2,765**
Net book value, March 31, 2014	$ 1,303	$ 2,819	$ 560	$ 4,682

7. Prepaid expenses

	2015	2014
Rent	$ 3,807	$ 3,807
Workplace, Health, Safety and Compensation Commission	2,006	3,620
Professional fees	280	2,823
Insurance	943	896
Other	573	541
	$ 7,609	$ 11,687

8. Contractual obligations

In January 2013, the Council entered into a five year agreement for the lease of office space. Annual lease payments over the next three years are as follows:

2016	$ 48,477
2017	48,477
2018	16,159
	$ 113,113

9. Financial risk management

The Council recognizes the importance of managing significant risks and this includes policies, procedures and oversight designed to reduce the risks identified to an appropriate threshold. The risks that the Council is exposed to through its financial instruments are credit risk, liquidity risk and market risk. There was no significant change in the Council's exposure to these risks or its processes for managing these risks from the prior year.

Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that one party to a financial instrument will cause a financial loss for the other party by failing to discharge an obligation. The Council's main credit risk relates to cash and accounts receivable. The Council's maximum exposure to credit risk is the carrying amounts of these financial instruments. The Council is not exposed to significant credit risk with its cash because this financial instrument is held with a Chartered Bank. The Council is not exposed to significant credit risk related to its accounts receivable. In addition, the Council has policies and procedures for the monitoring and collection of its accounts receivable so as to mitigate potential credit losses. There is no allowance for doubtful accounts since all amounts are considered collectible.

9. Financial risk management (Cont.)

Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the Council will be unable to meet its contractual obligations and financial liabilities. The Council manages liquidity risk by monitoring its cash flows and ensuring that it has sufficient resources available to meet its obligations and liabilities. The Council's exposure to liquidity risk relates mainly to its accounts payable and accrued liabilities and contractual obligations. The future minimum payments required from the Council in relation to its contractual obligations are outlined in Note 8.

Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value of future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Market risk comprises three types of risk: currency (foreign exchange) risk, interest rate risk and other price risk. The Council is not exposed to significant foreign exchange, interest rate or other price risk.

10. *Ovations*

During the year ended March 31, 2015, the Council, as a member of an external steering committee, held follow-up *Ovations* events around women's leadership. The steering committee consisted of representatives from the Council, the Women's Policy Office, located in the Executive Council of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, businesses, the community and industry. The events were funded through cash that was remaining in the *Ovations* fund from the prior year, as well as through a fee charged to attendees of the events. Cash that will be remaining in the fund upon settlement of accounts receivable and accounts payable and accrued liabilities outstanding as at March 31, 2015, has been designated to be used for follow-up *Ovations* events around women's leadership.

10. ***Ovations (Cont.)***

The following are details of revenues and expenses pertaining to the *Ovations* events which are included in the statement of operations of the Council:

	2014 Budget (Note 12)	2014 Actual	2013 Actual
REVENUES			
Ovations - ticket revenues	$ -	$ 615	$ 792
Interest	-	244	16
	-	859	808
EXPENSES (Note 11)			
Ovations events	-	16,597	5,059
	-	16,597	5,059
Annual (deficit) surplus	-	(15,738)	(4,251)
Accumulated surplus, beginning of year	41,051	41,051	45,302
Accumulated surplus, end of year	$ 41,051	$ 25,313	$ 41,051

11. Expenses by object

The following is a summary of expenses by object:

	2015 Budget (Note 12)	2015 Actual	2014 Actual
Amortization of tangible capital assets	$ 2,000	$ 5,050	$ 4,174
Grants and subsidies	200	8,578	2,450
Other	350	130	373
Professional fees	16,400	11,177	19,418
Rent	48,525	45,690	45,690
Salaries and benefits	321,900	321,211	311,052
Supplies and services	19,325	27,266	32,229
Travel related expenses	20,900	22,750	18,086
	$ 429,600	$ 441,852	$ 433,472

Included in the expenses by object are expenses pertaining to the *Ovations* events as noted below:

	2015 Budget (Note 12)	2015 Actual	2014 Actual
Professional fees	$ -	$ -	$ 1,597
Subsidies	-	8,474	-
Supplies and services	-	5,267	3,061
Travel related expenses	-	2,856	401
	$ -	$ 16,597	$ 5,059

12. Budgeted figures

Budgeted figures, which have been prepared on a cash basis, are provided for comparison purposes and have been derived from the estimates approved by the Council members.

13. Employee future benefits

The Council and its employees contribute to the Public Service Pension Plan in accordance with the *Public Service Pensions Act, 1991*. The plan is administered by the Public Service Pension Plan Corporation, including payment of pension benefits to employees to whom the *Act* applies. The Public Service Pension Plan is a multi-employer, defined benefit plan.

The plan provides a pension to employees based on their length of service and rates of pay. The maximum contribution rate for eligible employees was 11.85% (2014 - 8.6%). The Council's contributions equal the employee contributions to the plan. The Council is not required to make contributions in respect of any actuarial deficiencies of the plan. Total pension expense for the Council for the year ended March 31, 2015, was $22,118 (2014 - $19,902).

14. Related party transactions

The Council receives operating grants from the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Operating grants received during the year totaled $430,100 (2014 - $424,100).

15. Non-financial assets

The recognition and measurement of non-financial assets is based on their service potential. These assets will not provide resources to discharge liabilities of the Council. For non-financial assets, the future economic benefit consists of their capacity to render service to further the Council's objectives.

7 Appendix A: Advisory Council Biographies

President Linda Ross

Linda Ross has held the position of President and CEO of the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Newfoundland and Labrador since May 2009. She has over 30 years of experience in policy development and program planning and delivery in the field of community development, women's economic and social equality, HIV/AIDS and public health, both in Canada and internationally. Previous to joining the Provincial Advisory Council, Ms. Ross spent 24 years in various positions working with Oxfam Canada.

Ms. Ross has served on a number of Boards of Directors. She has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Women in Resource Development Corporation since 2009 and held the position of chair for 1.5 years. She is presently the Chair of the Coalition of Provincial and Territorial Advisory Councils on the Status of Women and sits on the Board of Directors for the College of Family Physicians of Canada. Graduating from the University of Waterloo with an Honours Baccalaureate in Science, Ms. Ross also holds certificates in Change Management and Performance Development from the Professional Development Institute and Management for National Voluntary Sector Leaders from the Faculty of Management at McGill University.

Vice President Carolyn Lavers

Carolyn is an Economic Development Officer with the provincial Department of Innovation Trade and Rural Development in Port au Choix. She is a small business entrepreneur and worked with the former Women's Enterprise Bureau. Carolyn has served on the boards of several local business development boards and other community agencies. She is also deeply concerned about issues related to violence, rural child care solutions, women's employment and women in leadership. She brings great dedication and insight to our work. Carolyn lives in Port au Choix and serves as mayor of her community.

Mary Pia Benuen

Mary Pia was born and raised in Sheshatshiu, Labrador. Through hard work and many sacrifices, Mary Pia was the first Innu woman to become a nurse. She is a true community leader, involved in health promotion, facilitating workshops, and community research. She sits on a number of community advisory groups. Mary Pia volunteers with

the Family Resource Centre and is always willing to go that "extra mile" with families who are experiencing hardships, including providing emotional support when suicide or death occur. Mary Pia and her beautiful daughter live in Sheshatshiu.

Stephanie Flowers

Stephanie is an Aboriginal woman originally from the community of Rigolet, on the north coast of Labrador. She obtained her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Saint Mary's University in 2005. In the past she has worked with the Mokami Status of Women Council, as well as volunteered on a committee to start up a new Family Resource Centre in her area. She is deeply passionate about working with women and would like to expand her education and advocacy into nutrition and maternal health. Stephanie currently resides with her family in Happy Valley, Labrador.

Yamuna Kutty

Yamuna is the past President of the Multicultural Women's Organization of Newfoundland and Labrador. She has also served on the St. John's Status of Women Council, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, and the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada. Yamuna is involved with numerous projects and initiatives. She brings critical perspectives about lives of immigrant and refugee women to our work, along with a warm and caring heart. She has an extremely busy volunteer schedule. Yamuna and her family live in St. John's.

Michelle Murdoch

Michelle is a woman with a disability and she is a determined feminist. She has previously chaired the Independent Living Resource Centre (ILRC), a cross-disability service organization, and is currently the provincial representative with the Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres. She holds a Master's in Women's Studies from Memorial University. As part of her program, Michelle completed a participatory action research project about women with disabilities and employment. Her interests extend across a broad range of social justice issues, including poverty, unemployment and education. She is keenly analytical and always ready to ask the important questions. Michelle and her family live in St. John's.

Kelly Power

Kelly is the past director of the Carpenter Millwrights' College in Paradise. She has actively promoted skilled trades to women and encouraged partnerships with organizations to attract women to the construction industry. Kelly is very passionate about ensuring the success of female apprentices and works closely with them to help mediate barriers in training and employment. Kelly has been involved with the Federation of Labour, Education Committee and with the Department of Innovation, Trade and Rural Development, Strategic Partnership Innovation Committee. Kelly is originally from Hermitage and currently lives with her family in Conception Bay South.

Hilda Whelan

Hilda fought for, and won, women's rights in a case involving surviving spouses and the Worker's Health and Safety Compensation Commission. Hilda solely represented and fought for all widows involved in the case for fifteen years, winning an important victory for women's equality. She is a strong advocate, concerned about a wide variety of issues affecting women, including violence and access to child care. Hilda brings the realities of rural women to the work of the Advisory Council. She is determined to continue to make a difference. Hilda and her family live in Whitbourne, where she holds the position of Mayor and sits on numerous committees serving the people of her town.

Cynthia Benoit

Cynthia was born and raised in St. Alban's. After high school Cynthia went on and graduated from St. Thomas University in New Brunswick with a Bachelor of Arts and Human Services Counselling Diploma. Over the course of Cynthia's career she has worked and volunteered in the social services sector. Through Cynthia's work and volunteer activities she has had the opportunity to work with youth directly dealing with social policies and issues. It is through these experiences that Cynthia has developed compassion and empathy specifically for children and youth. Earning a Bachelor of Social Work with the University of Manitoba, Cynthia is a social worker with Miawpukek First Nation Self Government Initiative and is committed to working in the Coast of Bays region with the goal of continuing to be a strong advocate of our children and youth. Cynthia lives in the community of Conne River with her husband and two children.

Lorraine Hearn

Lorraine's professional background is in the fields of Nursing and Addiction Studies and Intervention. In 1998, she graduated from McMaster University in Ontario with two Diplomas; one in Addictions Studies and the other in Addictions Care Worker. In 1998-9, she earned Associate Counselor Status in Addictions through the Canadian Certification Board for Alcohol and Drug Counselors'. She began volunteering with the Committee Against Violence in 1992 and over the years, held various executive positions. Lorraine is the past Executive Director of the Central West Committee Against Violence Inc. working under the Violence Prevention Initiative. She continues her anti-violence advocacy work in the central west region of the province. Lorraine provides leadership in violence prevention initiatives as well as provide education, awareness and training on violence issues. She has extensive background in delivering community presentations, workshops and training in all areas of violence as well as advocating for women and victims of violence.

Melita Collier

Melita is a Career Development Specialist with Department of Advanced Education and Skills. She has been committed to women's issues and advancements for many years and in numerous ways. Her involvement in the Coast of Bays International Women's Day Committee is one of the ways she expresses her passion for ensuring healthy, safe and supportive workplace practices for which diversity and inclusiveness are valued. Melita works with marginalized and under-represented groups, bringing awareness and education to women's social, economic and political challenges, and she is a Silent Witness Advocate. She obtained a Bachelor of Administrative Studies in 1997 from York University in Toronto and returned to Newfoundland in 2003. She visits Toronto, where her daughter lives, regularly. Melita currently resides in St. Alban's.